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## Senate Committee Approves Bill to Increase Incentives for TV and Film Production Companies

Feb 09, 2009 by Faroe Robinson

(KCPW News) Hoping to attract more filmmakers to Utah, a senate committee approved a bill today that would allow production companies to receive up to 20 percent of their costs back if they shoot in the state. The current cap is 15 percent. Utah Film Commission Director Marshall Moore says there already is interest in filming in Utah, but this bill would help level the playing field with other states.

"The studios have these big budget productions, they are trying to bring them to Utah, but they can't, because we are not allowing them to. Many productions have turned their back on our landscapes because our incentives haven't matched the beauty that we've had and they've made compromises going to other places that maybe don't offer the natural beauty the way that we have it here in Utah," Moore said.

The Governor's Office of Economic Development predicts the expanded incentive would put almost \$4 million dollars a year directly into education and the general fund, and have a nearly \$480 million impact on Utah's economy. Bill Sponsor Senator Lyle Hillyard explained that the bill gives smaller productions a refund, while bigger productions receive a tax credit.

"We changed it from a refund to a credit, and so it's not us giving money them hoping something will happen, they've got to really happen and have it do here. And the final point I would make is that these kinds of jobs are very high paying jobs and we have a great industry here now, if we lose it, it will be almost impossible to get it back," Hillyard said.

The bill still retains the \$500,000 cap on cash rebates, while tax credits would not be limited. It would cost the state \$7.5 million more annually, which Hillyard says is a small price tag for the benefits. The bill was unanimously approved and will now be debated in the full Senate.



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